

**Interview with Joanne Malone
conducted by Linda Byrne for the
Providence District History Project Providence Perspective**

April 17, 2009

Linda Byrne: Today is April the 17, (2009) it is a Friday afternoon a beautiful sunny day. I am sitting at the home of Joanne Malone. How are you Joanne?
[Joanne lives in the Pine Spring area of Falls Church, Virginia]

Joanne Malone: I am fine thank you.

Linda: Could you give me your address?

Joanne: 2929, Pine Spring Road Falls Church, Virginia 22042.

Linda: How long have you lived here?

Joanne: Let's see approximately 41 years.

Linda: Where did you grow up? Where were you born?

Joanne: I was born in Baltimore, Maryland and I grew up there and then got married and let's see when was it, well I got married and moved to Stanford, Connecticut for about four years. And then we moved down here to the Virginia area living in Annandale at first in a small apartment. And then by going around looking at some communities which had the type of architecture that we enjoyed went to three communities; Holland Hills, Holmes Run and the one that we eventually settled on which was Pine Spring. We had two children that grew up here I'm still living here, my husband died 26 years ago. And I love it here, I always have.

Linda: It's a beautiful community that has relatively small houses by the current standards of 2009.

Joanne: Right.

Linda: And they are all individually designed so different and the right size for the lots and you have a beautiful amount of space here.

Joanne: Well as a matter of fact in our directory that comes out sometimes sporadically in these last few decades but anyway it indicates how innovative this community was in its architecture and so it was in Home and Gardens. As a matter of fact I have some information here of the various articles that were put together in connection with the community and how different it was and I think maybe that might be of interest to you.

Linda: Yes, This is called the Pine Spring Story magazine articles about the founding architects and Design theory of Pine Spring Gardens and this is from House Beautiful from 1952 and the Saturday Evening Post 1961. This is wonderful.

Joanne: And these, a lot of people - the smaller homes, the one level homes a lot of young families used those as starter homes. And then there are a few that have come back later after they've moved out because their families have gotten larger. And they've moved out but they have come back to either to settle in here because they liked the community. And its location is so wonderful because we are between Rt. 50 and Lee Highway, closer really to Rt. 50 and the Beltway. So and even though that sounds possibly very traffic oriented it is but it's not that bad as far as when Spring comes and the trees are blossoming and such, we very seldom hear the Beltway. Although there is some construction going on in the Beltway that has cut down a number of trees which I think we're going to see have some effect on what we hear here. But it really is a great community and people who do live here are very active, not necessarily that our - we have a Civic Association meeting every month, except in the summer; but maybe it is limited to Officer's or a few other people. But when there is a situation an issue that we really need to get behind, the people come through they come through here. We have a Civic Association that has been in existence, I am not quite sure when it actually started but we became incorporated and it's just been people who are very - the type of people who have these - who live in these homes want very much to take care of them and see that the community is intact.

Linda: And is there an Elementary School within walking distance?

Joanne: Yes, Pine Spring Elementary School is right in the actual neighborhood itself. Across the Rt. 50, on Jaguar Trail is the Falls Church High School and then the middle school is about possibly two miles down the road. Luther Jackson Middle School which is also very near the intersection of 50 and Gallows Road. And this is all very close probably within three miles, three or four miles all those three schools. And also we have shopping available, restaurants, it's a very somewhat sometimes a congested area. However there are some things taking place now that are trying to relieve that congestion which we're all looking forward to.

Linda: So it's a walkable community with stores not too far?

Joanne: Yes, right up here we have the Safeway which is very close by and then right down the hill is Magruders. And as a matter of fact if you are a walker it's a great place to walk. We've got sidewalks. And um when I say sidewalks, I don't have any on my side of the street but they do on the other side of the street. And the neighborhood next to us had no sidewalks at all, and now they do. So these are things that have progressed over the years. And um, we also have Loehman's Plaza which has a number of stores; also has a new Giant store there. All that's necessary I think is very, very close by.

Linda: Oh, that sounds perfect. Is there a community pool or any amenities?

Joanne: No, not here however in Holmes Run they did build a pool in the area, and as a matter of fact since the homes are so similar and we all sort of have the same kinds of interest some of the people living here in Pine Spring did take membership there and we did too. We have membership at Holmes Run Acres Pool for many years. At first my children were growing up swam on the swim team and went to various adult kinds of parties and things like that. And even now I am very good friends with a number of the people over there. And we have an investment club called the Dowagers and believe it or not we're still above water. So anyway and we meet once a month and I've been involved in it now for about eight years, eight or nine years and we have a lot of fun and it's just Dowagers, just ladies.

Linda: Well I congratulate you on your financial position at this time.

Joanne: Seriously, really we were you know, we did lose money we did, but honestly we did not take a beating. As a matter of fact there are a number of clubs that have actually gone out of business because of that you know because of their losses.

Linda: I myself belong to one called WIN, Women Investor's Now and we are no longer in existence. We came out even; at one point had we had liquidated we would have been way ahead but we didn't and lasted around five years. It was a lot of fun, and you meet a lot of interesting people and learned so much.

Joanne: Yes, yes.

Linda: Your children and going to school; tell me about experiences.

Joanne: Well my children are both deaf and so there was ofcourse concern about their education, but we found out very early about their deafness. My son was born first and um we right away put him in the pre-school at Gallaudet University. They had a preschool there and ah.

Linda: That's in Washington, D.C.

Joanne: Yes it is in Washington, D.C. So I would drive him down there and he would be with some other children and a teacher. At first there was a one to one type relationship with a teacher and then other students joined in. And I sat behind a one way mirror and I watched the type of, well eventually, signing that my son did.

Prior to that we used speech, just using speech and then we used cued speech which was using actual hand signals whereby you would show the phonetics. It was based on phonetics and there were certain hand signals that identified a phonic sound, okay, but the problem was that we didn't feel that we were getting enough back from Shawn. We felt we were giving him a lot and that he was not really giving us a lot back. However one day he was outside, and all the kids intermingled, the kids who did oral, who did cues, who signed they all intermingled there was no quote, unquote separation.

Linda: Um hum.

Joanne: But anyway what happened was he tore his pants and he was crying. And I asked him, you know, what's wrong, What's wrong and he pointed to his pants and he said "broke". So he had the concept that it wasn't whole anymore and it was broken now.

Linda: Yes.

Joanne: That's the sign for broke like a stick. Well I corrected him and said no it's torn. Your pants are torn okay, so anyway we decided then to start using sign language. We first of course started with the A,B,C's and all those kinds of things. And it advanced and of course I was going to school with Shawn and that was another thing you know keeping their attention at that young age. But anyway I was taking him down there and seeing what was going on and my husband was sort of left out of it because he was working and it was difficult for him, it truly was.

Besides the fact that our son was deaf we had to learn how to communicate and of course even if I had to stand on my head with a wooden nickel I would have done that

Linda: Of course, yes.

Joanne: to be able to communicate with my son.

Anyway another good thing because the parents got together you know us ladies most of the women who came down there were the mothers with the children, sometimes the fathers were involved. But anyway we would talk and it was so good for me especially because I had he was my first child and I didn't know if some of the behavior he was exhibiting was because he was deaf or was it just because of his age; you know that kind of thing. And so it was really great talking to people and finding out well that's perfect behavior for a year old or year and a half - yeah they're suppose to act like that or stuff. So it was really comforting to find out that.

Then my daughter was born and I thought and I thought I was going to have my daughter and I thought oh good – I said now I’m going to have a daughter who will take care of her brother, okay. That is what I thought (chuckling) because I was thinking mostly of the hearing part of it okay.

So anyway when she was born, - let me go back a bit here - when my son was born they said well what happened to your son; why was he deaf. Well, They think - they thought at the time that I had measles, not measles excuse me this is ridiculous I can’t even think of this.

Linda: One of the childhood diseases?

Joanne: No they thought – oh, he fell off the bed I guess is what it was – he fell off the bed and so they thought maybe that had something to do with it. They didn’t really know. No – I had gee what a I think I’ve got this mixed up, when, no - I had the flu in the third month of my pregnancy so they thought that might have something to do with it okay. And then there was a time when he did fall off the bed. And they didn’t think that but there were some other people who thought that might have something to do with it.

But anyway we went to genetic counseling and found out really not much. After my daughter was born and found out that she was deaf too I went over to University of Maryland I think it was for a test over there. And I think Amy’s deafness was the most difficult one to take because I really thought she heard. And I remember because when I looked at her she made the same kind of sounds that I was making to her. Maybe it was just cause I had heard her making those sounds, I don’t know. But anyway my husband went into her bedroom one night with some pans and a spoon and he started banging on them and she didn’t respond at all.

My kids are very alert otherwise, visually and everything and all the other senses seem to be very acute and things like that. I am really very, very proud of my children because they did well. They went down there and I then brought Shawn out here into Fairfax County when Public old 94 142 was enacted.

Linda: What was that?

Joanne: That was saying that they had to have an education. There was an interpreter available to go into the classroom. At first they were integrated into mainstreamed rather into Physical Education, and then into Math because they were looking at these things because there was less language involved.

Linda: What years would that have been roughly?

Joanne: Okay this would have been in the

Linda: the 1970's?

Joanne: Let's see I'm just trying to think because he was born in 61 so yes it would have had to have been even earlier than that even earlier because he went to Mantua Elementary school, he went to Frost and he went to Woodson. And at Mantua I went ahead and volunteered in the regular classroom because I wanted to make sure that what my child was being exposed to was what the other children were being exposed to. So that's what I, how I sort of looked at things.

I was also on the Mantua PTA and represented the class - Total Communication Program as it was called at that point. And he did well. Amy, I brought Amy out I wasn't happy about the situation she was in because she was in a school where they not only had kids that signed which were at a very low percentage to the kids who were in the oral program and that was over at Camelot. They did not want my daughter – they didn't want the children who signed to associate with the other kids. Parents were very afraid that the other oral deaf children would pick these things up. It was something I learned, I learned all of this coming up through you know having a deaf children.

Linda: Why would that be a problem?

Joanne: Well because they thought they would use signs and they wanted them to communicate orally regardless; they wanted oral communication. And some kids it worked out fine for, it did; but there were who it did not work out for.

My children were both profoundly deaf and we communicated okay, we communicated with each other. They were in an educational setting where they

were communicating with people and that went through Mantua, and Frost and into High School in Woodson. And they also maintained friends, hearing friends who were interested in learning sign language and as it turned out when they got into High School that was considered a foreign language. And so you could use that for getting into a college. Now these are hearing kids who took some of this on and they develop some relationships there. But the kids truly did cling to their kind so to speak okay, which is fine don't we all do that?

Linda: We do.

Joanne: Anyway, they went on to college. My son went to RIT, that's Rochester Institute of Technology and he got a degree in Electrical Engineering. And then my daughter went on to Gallaudet and she got an undergraduate degree in English. And then she went to McDaniel's which use to be called Western Maryland College and now they changed it to McDaniels because that is more apropos because it's not really in Western Maryland. Of course it took all this time, many many years to do that. But anyway she got her Master's there and she now works at the Gallaudet Campus and she is teaching and administrator in the MSSD which is the Model Secondary School for the deaf on campus there at Gallaudet and she teaches English among other things.

And my son-in-law, he also is deaf, and he is a social worker for Deaf Outreach. And they both live in D.C. they just bought a home last year.

Linda: Oh how nice.

Joanne: And let's see my son works over here in Bethesda, Chevy Chase; he has the Lab Center over there the computer. He use to do the same thing in Fairfax County School System but now he's got a much larger kind of a group he's dealing with. And ah, he has a home in Gaithersburg. So my kids are nearby, which is great.

Linda: Oh that is.

Joanne: I guess I talked too long.

Linda: Oh, no, no, no, that's very interesting. One of the other people in our, on our Interview list, Lilyan Spero, her daughter was Principal at Mantua at one time and I think that Lilyan also taught deaf children at one time.

Joanne: Oh really? I didn't know that.

Linda: I believe so, I have to go back and check that interview. One of the things that I am struck by is the 40 years that you have been here and the changes that you have seen and those opportunities that have been available for your children. are you seeing a continuation of that an improvement of those kinds of things?

Joanne: Well, as a matter of a fact, not necessarily because at the time that my children were growing up there was a large deaf population because the rubella had a lot to do with that too and the measles but my children were not affected by the measles. And the population is not as large so therefore services are being somewhat diminished which is somewhat understandable. But for those people whose children are deaf it's something they have a difficult time dealing with. But yes, I think that even the people, you know the citizens here they've been made more aware of it. I mean I never knew a deaf person, until my children or knew anybody well until my children came along and I got involved in the deaf community and working for their cause so to speak. But let's see as far as I say, some of these things are becoming, there is less of a population involved.

But, and the other thing is technology. I mean there is cochlear implants which a lot of parents are looking at, certainly hearing parents. And ah these are some thing that was being worked on when my children were growing up and offered you know a hope, so to speak, that they would become quote unquote "normal". But I think at first there was no insurance that would pay for that operation and then there was the fact that they felt that it would work on smaller children. Ones that were just starting to have speech and such. Because the older person who would get it, just hearing this noise for the first time, was sometimes upsetting to them; because they had never heard anything like that before. And it's learning a language all over again you know it's - so anyway I left any decision

in something like that up to my children. I figured because they were older than the group they thought would possibly benefit more by it. And they've had some friends that have had had the cochlear implant and some have been successful and some not necessarily so.

But it is interesting because I talked to my children about this because I saw a documentary about a deaf family and the parents were hearing and they wanted to the daughter, the grandchild to have a cochlear implant; and the parents were adamant against it. And so anyway I asked my children what they thought about this you know what do you think about this would you be interested. My daughter and my son-in-law said "nope", not at all we would not be interested, there is nothing wrong with our being deaf; we function as well as anybody else so there is no reason to do that. You know I said even if it would be that you'd be able to broaden your horizons so to speak or something like that. And they said nope it's fine, we're okay.

So it was kind somewhat of a surprise somewhat, but not really because my daughter she's real active, she is like me. Like when she marched at the Capital when they were looking for a President for the College and she wanted them to have someone who was deaf because all of the other Presidents had been hearing. And what they were they were good fund raisers, they were good at as far as getting money from the Government and things like that. But the students never really felt that they were really represented well enough. So they went and marched an Washington about that. And even now recently, when they had this problem with Mrs. Hernandez, in connection with becoming President of the University, even though she is deaf she's hard of hearing so to speak, Anyway, she knows how to sign somewhat and she was part of the Gallaudet community. She was the proctor what is it, third in command... excuse me she was the Provost.

Linda: Okay.

Joanne: And they didn't really, the one thing about this whole thing with her was the fact that the faculty was so much behind the students on this. It wasn't just the students going out there on the limb, it was the faculty also out there with

them. And she really did not settle with the faculty she had a problem with the tenure of the Professors and stuff like that, she had a problem with that. And she did not give off the warm and fuzzy feeling that someone like that should portray. But anyway there was a lot of speculation as to whether this was a really good thing for the students to get involved in. But they did and they had her put down she wasn't accepted.

Linda: I think I remember reading about that.

Joanne: Yes, the contract was broken by Gallaudet really, is what it was.

Linda: Who is their President or Provost?

Joanne: Right now it's he was the President of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Bob Davies no, Bob Davila no that's that guy with the house yeah it's Robert Davila I think his name is, but anyway he was President when my son was up at Rochester.

Linda: That's great. Lets kind of switch topics here. Someone said that your passion is parks and I want to read you this little quote. This is from you "Parks are one of the reasons companies locate here and I feel we have an obligation to leave a legacy". Tell me why you would say something like that and is your passion parks?

Joanne: Yes it is it definitely is, I think that I mean that my children grew up in the parks here in Fairfax County. That was something that I always tried to give them as much experiences as possible. I took them out a lot to see a lot of things and showed them different language and stuff like that. Our whole family used the parks. I played ball and I played ball in the parks and my children played competitive kinds of sports. Plus they are beautiful they are just really nice and it's nice to have these places located in places where you may not even think there may be a park. And so I think it is something the we definitely should leave on leave to our children. And that is why I was so impressed or wanted so much to buy as much land as we could so that we would have this land to either develop or not develop but at least be able to pass it on to our children.

And yes, parks are very important I think for any company, you want things to be well rounded, you want your people to stay, you want them to be happy. The park system has won a great deal of awards. They've won several times in their category as far as being the best in the nation and I can't say enough about parks, I think they are great.

Linda: When you talk about land and accumulating land we haven't yet talked about the fact that you served on the Park Authority Board for 14 years?

Joanne: 14 years yeah.

Linda: Wonderful, you were appointed by three or four Supervisors?

Joanne: Yes, originally Kate Handley, who then became Chairman; Gerry Connolly, who then became Chairman; and Linda Smyth and who knows where she'll go.

Linda: (both laughing) That's right and Gerry Connolly is now in the U.S. Congress.

Joanne: Yes, and he's in the Congress. And Kate's down in Richmond so I mean you know I feel I really was mentored by quite a number of people who really love parks and not I think that's why I like working with them so much is because they do like parks. And they not only like them but actually do something about it.

Linda: Well one of the things I love that someone said about you is "Joanne excels at finding creative ways to manage limited funding".

Joanne: Ah yeah, I think that comes from my own frugality maybe, (laughing) I don't know.

Linda: And talk some of the parks.

Joanne: You mean here in Providence District?

Linda: Here in Providence, well let's see Borge Street comes to mind the Blake Lane dog leash.

Joanne: We've got of course Nottoway Park which is our jewel here as far as that goes. And we've got a lot of athletic fields and active and passive kinds of activities that go on there; and it's right in the middle of several communities. The activities that go on there and there are Farmer's Markets, athletics, walking, volley ball, all kinds of meetings, and historic kind of properties. And then we have Boge Park which was really that was the neighborhood was really responsible for getting that park up to snuff, so to speak. It had wooden types of structures and it needed to be updated and they were responsible in picking out what we needed and making sure that the neighborhood was very involved in it. And they picked out what they wanted, they got what they wanted and they seemed to be very happy with it.

Let's see some of the other parks we had over in - the same thing happened over in Idlewood Park. Yes, we put a playground up there which originally was going to be - had been on the original plan destined to be put in a particular area and we decided that we had to look for someplace else because it was just going to be rather difficult to get in there and do this and the people wanted the playground.

So with the staff and with the neighborhood and picking the different various pieces and things like that we ended up putting up a great park over in Idlewood. And as a matter of fact one of our managers there Ed Asperberg, I think his name is, he built these really small kinds of picnic tables for the little kids to sit on.

Linda: Yes.

Joanne: Which I hadn't seen these before; and it was something that he just put together himself; so he built a few of those.

Over the 14 years, my goodness there's just been so much involvement with the community and you know cooperation of course. There's been, we've been at odds with certain things but we've managed to talk about it. Like up here when we - here at Jefferson District Park when we put the miniature golf up. What was there before was one of these Buddha kinds of things, something you'd see down at the ocean or something like that. We put together something more aesthetic you know it just goes into the - it flows into the ambience of the area there. And

they were concerned about the kids – the kids were going to be there and they would cause trouble and so on and so forth. You know, we talked about it and we said we would try certain things to do and we would see how it would go and it worked out beautifully, it really is. And it's a great place, it's a great date place for teenagers and it also is a great family place.

Linda: And this is the Jefferson –

Joanne: Jefferson District Park up here the Miniature Golf Course up there.

Linda: With an 18 hole miniature golf course.

Joanne: Yeah, um hum, and then there is actually a golf course itself - for a lot of the seniors use and a lot of tournaments occur up there and things like that; and it's challenging enough for those who use it.

Linda: I have a note here that says "The 18 hole miniature golf course at the Jefferson Park District opened in 1996" so it has been serving us well.

Joanne: Oh, its been serving us very well yes; as far as money goes it was a big producer.

Linda: Then there is the OakMar mini golf which opened in 1999?

Joanne: Possibly that sounds right, the only problem there was they did not want lights and I said there would be no lights, there was no lights. So that was we abided by the community, we listened to them.

Linda: That was I understand recognized for its designation as the first American with Disabilities Act, with ADA accessible miniature golf course in the Fairfax County Park Authority System?

Joanne: I know it is ADA of course but I did not know that it was the first one, and it may very well be because I was interested in ADA issues and things like that.

I know they had to redo it that much I do know because it was too much of a slant, I do remember that about it.

Linda: Well now they are talking about going back and putting in lighting.

Joanne: Right. Well the manager there was very innovative. What he would do to keep it open all during the summer months is he put these white lights – he had like a trellis and he would put these white lights in it so it would keep it – at least they could keep it open longer and the lighting was not that it would be offensive to anybody. That was the manager and I thought that was kind of innovative on his part.

Linda: Then there's Towers Park?

Joanne: Yes Towers Park we had that we worked with Linda (Supervisor Linda Smyth) on that because the neighborhood next door Stonehurst - and I think Linda even lived there at one time, I am not sure I believe she did - but anyway, we had a good dialogue with the community there in putting up Towers Park because there was going to become somewhat a necessity to take down some trees. And as it turned out we didn't have to take down as much because the gentleman we had from the Park authority who worked on the site plan he did a marvelous job and he saved a great deal of trees and yet he did not lose any field. There was no limitation on the field or anything like that we didn't not have to lose anything at all.

Linda: So that's a baseball diamond?

Joanne: It is a diamond and also they can use it for soccer too.

Linda: Oh good. Talk a little bit about Accotink Gateway Connector Trail.

Joanne: Accotink Gateway Connector Trail okay that was another community ... (laughing)

Linda: Accomplished in large measure to you.

Joanne: Well I'd like to think I did, however, there was certainly a lot of other people involved in this believe me. Ah, along with Sally

Linda: Sally Ormsby?

Joanne: yeah, Sally Ormsby and gosh the Park Authority too, I had some really good help there. But anyway yes that um.

Linda: It's a trail link at the head waters of the Accotink Creek and it provides access to over seven miles of multi-purpose trail.

Joanne: Um hum, right it goes through the Mantua Community there. It goes all the way down to the Beltway. And then it goes on further down and it's quite extensive and I am not sure exactly what the status is of the entire trail; but I know that it's certainly walkable. And um the bridge, let's see there was a bridge put up too that you could get to it through - we also had to put it on another side of the stream, instead of the other side. Some of the things we had - at first we were working with Fairfax City on this but then we needed some Ice Tea Funds and there was some sort of a problem there with the ISTEA funds. So as it turned out we broke off from the City in working with them because we thought that we could

Linda: Do you remember what ISTEA [Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act] stands for?

Joanne: I'd have to go back and look.

Linda: The Inter County ?

Joanne: The Inter County and it has to do with traffic

Linda: and environmental

Joanne: Yes, that kind of thing I'm sorry I should know this, but I can't remember I can get it for you. Anyway there was a problem and it seemed like a better deal for us go to off on our own. But then we had as far as the City of Fairfax goes we have a good relationship with them. I mean that worked out with Mantua too with putting up a park there and Concoria Development right there off of Pickett Road. There was a sliver of land that I think was the City's and we ended up negotiating over that.

I also believe it or not working with the Developers too – we got - they were able to work with us and help us out. And um you know it was great when everybody was on the same page okay. But it was also good you know to have some support from the developers too. I'd like to say that because you know we do have a lot of problems too but we had some pretty good results with working with the developers and things like that.

Linda: Yes, well the Oakton Library.

Joanne: Yes.

Linda: And the extra little half acre which is a Park which they proffered a little later.

Joanne: Right, exactly.

Linda: That land was the first time a Developer had donated land that could be

Joanne: Yeah, as a matter of fact we in Providence we have done some firsts, we certainly have.

Linda: Yes.

Joanne: And it's ah

Linda: Well one of the other notes I have is in 2005 the Cross County Trail was completed which provides a 45 mile link across Fairfax County and the Accotink Gateway Connector Trail has become the core of the Cross County Trail.

Joanne: Right.

Linda: I have a quote here and I unfortunately don't know to whom this goes but "Mrs. Malone can take a large measure of credit for having the insight to protect our stream valleys which is so necessary in order to create a county wide green corridor. One that protects our wildlife, provides for improved water quality, and links community together through trails".

Joanne: I don't know who said that.

Linda: I don't know who to attribute that too but everyone I know was extremely sorry to see you retire because your good works have been legend.

Joanne: Well I anyway as far as the Connector goes, Gerry wanted that; I mean he said you know that this is something we really need to have.

Linda: Gerry Connolly.

Joanne: Gerry Connolly and the great part about it is that it goes off - there are trails that go off from it. It goes through all the Districts, it touches into all of them. And um it's I think is quite a feat, I really do and its of course our area we didn't have that much to acquire we really didn't. Up more to the north up around Oakton and that area up there is where we had to get some permission from communities and also to because some of where we wanted to go was right through common land. It wasn't necessarily developed land but it was common land and it was owned by the various Civic Associations.

So there was a lot of finagling that you had to do you know to get these things. But um as I say the best part was that you could go off to other trails you know from this. As you say it was a spine and so it worked that way. Yeah that was the first as a matter of fact on the Accotink we put up - we had culverts over the creek there. It was innovative we hadn't used it in any other places in the parks in our parks. But they were like boxes of concrete okay. There were about four of them across the stream and then they had the flat top on the path and such that went over the top of it; and the neat thing about it was that it would collect any of the debris that went down the stream. Okay it would jam up there but not to the point where we let it jam up too much but at least it wasn't like these big logs and things could come down there and get jammed if it was just like this okay. We needed something to stop it from going further downstream okay, but we had to make sure that our maintenance people went out there to check it regularly enough to move the debris because when we have a really bad storm especially in Mantua there the debris that would come down there would be massive. If we didn't get it, it would just go right on into the Mantua area; there where all the streams that are down there by Prosperity Road and places like that; cause we had some waters down there with the park.

Linda: So kind of like a filter system.

Joanne: Yeah like a filter system - what they called a culvert kind of thing but it was new and we never used it before. And the idea was to try and back up some of that sewage - those big trees that would come down naturally - not something that was necessarily cut down. And to prevent some other kind of erosions around it and things like that so.

Linda: Lets jump back to um September 1992, you served on the Athletic Council.

Joanne: Oh yes um hum.

Linda: And um talk a little bit about that and about Golden Girls.

Joanne: Oh, let's see, the Athletic Council - I was a liaison between the Park Authority and the Athletic Council. Of course I was involved in athletics myself, was with the Northern Virginia Senior Soft Ball which is composed of mostly men. And then I was also with the Golden Girls, which was a team played soft ball here in Fairfax County, represented Fairfax County - went around the Country and played ball, soft ball.

Linda: What ages?

Joanne: Well we started out at 50 and we went all the way up to 75, I mean within different groups.

Linda: Yes.

Joanne: And it was open to anybody, okay it's open to anyone and regardless of your ability. And we had like beginner kinds of things and people just want to get out and be active and you know their friends were doing it or something like that. So anyway, and then there were some that were better and you know they went out and traveled and represented the area and stuff like that. And we had tournaments here and the Senior Softball group did too. I was the Treasurer of the Senior Softball for four years.

I represented the Park Authority on the Athletic Council. I would say that it was difficult, it was difficult because there were clicks in the Athletic Council. Baseball

at that time was the big thing. Soccer was really trying to move in and the Park Authority there was somewhat of a fractural kind of relationship; I don't think we quite understood what each other was trying to do here. And there were seemingly - we just a problem getting together with each other.

At that time women's or girls sports were very prominent on the rise there and so that was also meeting with resistance. And so it was trying to work with people to try and answer everybody and talk to everyone but at least to get some sort of working arrangement. And I was sort of a buffer in a way - it wasn't exactly the best time for me on the Park Authority but it worked out. I mean it worked out plus we had Hal Strickland who was also on the Athletic Council; he came over right before I did and he was very strong on the Athletic Council.

And then there are some other people who also became interested in athletics and the fact that the women were interested - were wanting to be a part of everything. Soccer was wanting to be a part of everything so these, so to speak, these clicks sort of broke up and there was a lot more dialogue between the groups; and even between the Park Authority to, because we didn't quite have a very good understanding of them either.

Because as a matter of a fact I was the Chairman of the with maintenance anyway I worked with Tim White and he was in charge of the maintenance and stuff in the Park Authority and things like that. So we had a lot to do with - we build fields okay and these groups played on them and stuff like that. There was a lot of just a lot of dialogue which we have worked out and I think we've gotten much, much better there is certainly a lot better understanding between the active and the passive kind of recreation that takes place in our parks and the athletic groups that are very involved in the passive part I mean the active part of it more than any other groups really.

Linda: Um hum. I don't know if we mentioned Oakton Park. That was one of your more recent additions.

Joanne: Yeah, I was really sorry cause I was looking forward to seeing the moving of it from up there at the bank.

Linda: Oh that's the schoolhouse.

Joanne: Yeah, the schoolhouse to the actual site, but I think at that time there was something health wise and I wasn't able to do that, but I remember wanting to be able to see that.

Linda: Your referring to where Appalachian Outfitters had been at the corner of Hunter Mill Road and Rt. 123.

Joanne: Yes, at the corner of Hunter Mill and 123 right.

Linda: And they took the school house portion of that, when Appalachian Outfitters was torn down.

Joanne: Right.

Linda: And moved it to the park which was about 1/8 of a mile maybe.

Joanne: Yes.

Linda: Oakton Park which had recently been acquired for the Park Authority - just down the street. Well, I must tell you that my family got up early that morning and went out and we took photographs

Joanne: Did you really.

Linda: of them moving it and it was quite a fete.

Joanne: I bet it was. Now didn't they have to take down the electric lines and things like that?

Linda: In several places, yes they did.

Joanne: Now that to me would be astonishing just to see that – see this thing moving through. I really am so sad I didn't get to see that because I did really want to see that.

Linda: Well they are going to have – we are in April now – I believe it's May 16th no, not May 16th it's – no I'll have to go back and look this up for you. It's either May 16th or June 16th they are having the dedication of the building there.

Joanne: Oh really – okay.

Linda: We just found this out yesterday so I have to go back and check the date and I'll let you know for sure.

Joanne: Okay, yes.

Linda: But you'll definitely want to be there.

Joanne: Oh yes, yes, yes I will, I will.

Linda: But, I am sure they will send you an invitation.

Joanne: Well they as a matter of fact, you know, that was more or less the last thing that I had some what involved in and so I wasn't really there to see it followed through; so this'll be nice to be able to see it there.

Linda: Oakton Park is some 9.8 acres - half of it in the planning, I was fortunate enough to be on the planning committee the citizen's side of the planning committee for that and you are having a soccer field.

Joanne: Yes.

Linda: The back five acres will remain in woods and have trails.

Joanne: Right.

Linda: And then there's the schoolhouse from the 1800's that was moved there. Also there will be picnic tables and a play area for children.

Joanne: Right, okay.

Linda: With some amenities.

Joanne: What about the young couple next door?

Linda: Sue Lee

Joanne: Right.

Linda: Yes, they I think are happy now.

Joanne: The parking lot.

Linda: The parking lot was - I believe they are that the Park Authority has planted some things that will be between the house and parking lot.

Joanne: Right exactly that was the last more or less thing that I worked out was to be sure that she got

Linda: Yes and Supervisor Smyth was able to find funding for a sidewalk which will run from the park, up passed the nursing home up to 123 actually.

Joanne: Great, that's great.

Linda: There is already an existing portion

Joanne: There's already sidewalk.

Linda: by the office buildings there so it actually will run more or less from the shopping center pass the pre-school on down to the park.

Joanne: Great, great, that's wonderful.

Linda: That supposedly will be completed this summer in August, I believe.

Joanne: Good.

Linda: So we are moving right along and now once we get the round-a-bout in front of the park then it will be

Joanne: You are going to get the round – cause they were talking about that there wasn't any real decision on that that I knew of but they are going to do that?

Linda: Well there is no funding for it right now but Supervisor Smyth is pushing for that. VDOT does not have funding, the Park Authority does not have funding so once the money is available, I think...

Joanne: How about the Stimulus money – how about what they are denying there down in Richmond you know for unemployment why don't you try to apply for a round-a-about.

Linda: Yes, that would be good that will be the first one on Hunter Mill Road and so as a scenic byway it will be a wonderful addition.

Joanne: Oh yes, over where my brother and sister-in law moved they have several in that area so I

Linda: Where do they live?

Joanne: They are over in Maryland up in Bel Air Maryland.

Linda: Yes, great. Um, just one more question for you.

Joanne: Sure, am I going on too much here or what?

Linda: No, no you are doing extremely well. If you were going to talk to people who are going to move to Fairfax County in the future, what would you say to them?

Joanne: I would say move, but be careful where you move because really traffic is really a big problem here, it really is. And I would just say if you're not use to a lot of traffic, this may not be the place or unless you want to go further out or something like that. But I like it because I like living here because of all the activity.

The Nation - the Capital is right near by so when I open up the first page of my newspaper it tells me all about the Capital. I don't have to go back 5 or 10 pages

to find out what's going on in Washington. There's a lot of free things there and being involved in my community and stuff, I like being close to the action. And I think it's so great.

The schools are great, the parks are great, the hospitals they're pretty darn good too. And um if we didn't have all of this congestion and if people didn't think of their car as an extension of themselves and just one person in the car. I was over at my son's, he lives in Maryland in Gaithersburg and he brought me home; I had stayed overnight and he brought me home. We were going down the HOV lane and there was nobody in the HOV lane, no one; they were all over here on the other side, bumper to bumper with each other. We were the only ones.

Linda: And you only needed two to be in the high occupancy lane.

Joanne: Yes, just two just two and you know I said to him my goodness – I said – why in the world can't you find somebody over there where you work that would be willing to because this is ridiculous. No wonder people spend so much money on gas they are all over there sitting on the thing. But anyway that's one of my issues.

No, I think Fairfax is a great place to live, I really do. I've enjoyed it and the people, - I love the people here. There's of course a lot of people here who are transitional. You know, weren't actually born here – like it's rare to find somebody who was actually born and grew up here. But it's great cause you see and talk to different people from all over the country and you get a lot of different kinds of ideas and I just think really that our Government is run really good here in Virginia, I really do, I think its run pretty well.

Linda: Good.

Joanne: Not just because I am a Democrat but I just think we are somewhat frugal I think in a lot of ways and I think that's good. And ah I think our Government our local Government is run pretty well.

Linda: Yes. Well, I thank you very much for this interview. Is there anything else you'd like to say for posterity here?

Joanne: Well, as I say I talked about the hierarchy that I worked under and they all went on to be Chairmen so who knows that might have to Linda (referring to Supervisor Linda Smyth) one of these days, I'd like to see it happen.

Linda: Thank you.

Joanne: Oh, one other thing though.

Linda: Um hum.

Joanne: I would like to or maybe this it's off the record but I was wondering how Ken is enjoying his stay on the Park Authority. Do you know or –

Linda: I think he is enjoying it very much.

Joanne: Is he really – good.

Linda: Yeah, yeah.

Joanne: Good, I'm glad to hear that.

Linda: He was there last night at a meeting where they presented the changes in the master plan for Oak Marr and he spoke and I think he was pleased that everyone in the room was for the change plan.

Joanne: Well I think that's great – it's always great when you get unanimous agreement.

Linda: Yes.

Joanne: Absolutely.

Linda: And it's so nice to see the Park Authority – you know they come out to the citizens. I mean you work with us so well.

Joanne: Oh, yes, yes. We sometimes, as a matter of fact there is more staff people there than people who are coming to speak or whatever you know – it's the staff's there they are good staff – they are a very good staff. They certainly you know helped me out a great deal.

Linda: Thank you.